



Packed Lunch Policy

Date of last Review	Signature
July 2026	

Date of next Review	Signature
July 2028	

Overall aim of the policy:

To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school trips) provide pupils with healthy and nutritious food that is similar in quality to food served in schools, which is required to meet national standards.

Where, when and to whom the policy applies:

The policy applies to all pupils and parents providing packed lunches to be eaten within school or on school trips during normal school hours.

At Alford Primary School, we understand that our pupils benefit from eating a balanced and nutritious diet. Among other benefits, a good diet helps to;

- Keep skin, teeth, and eyes healthy
- Support muscles
- Helps achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- Strengthens bones
- Encourages brain development
- Supports healthy growth
- Boosts immunity
- Helps the digestive system function

In 2015 the School Food Standards for school lunches was published ¹ to ensure that all children who eat a school dinner benefit from eating quality food during the school day. The standards apply to all food and drink supplied by school to pupils, staff and visitors from the start of the school day to 6pm.

Food and drink in packed lunches at Alford Primary School:

- Alford Primary School will provide appropriate and attractive facilities for pupils eating packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- Alford Primary School will work with parents to encourage packed lunches to meet the standards listed below.
- As we do not have facilities to refrigerate packed lunches brought from home, we recommend that they are sent in insulated lunch bags or contain ice packs to ensure food is kept cool, particularly during the summer months. We are unable to cool or heat food, so please ensure all packed lunch items are ready to eat.
- Wherever possible Alford Primary School will enable pupils eating packed lunches and pupils eating school lunches to sit together.

Packed lunches should include:

- at least one portion of fruit and one portion of vegetables every day.
- meat, fish, eggs, or a non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, houmous, peanut butter, falafel) every day.
- oily fish, such as salmon, at least once every three weeks.
- a starchy food such as any type of bread (white or wholegrain rolls, pitta bread or wraps), pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or another cereal every day.
- a dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard every day.
- a drink of water, fruit juice (maximum portion 150 mls), semi-skimmed, 1% fat or skimmed milk, yoghurt or another milk drink.

Packed lunches can occasionally include:

¹ [School food standards practical guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/474112/school_food_standards_practical_guide.pdf)

- Meat products such as sausage rolls, individual pies, corned meat and sausages (no more than once a week)
- Lower sugar cakes and biscuits, but encourage your child to eat these as part of a meal

Appendix 1 & 2 gives guidance on appropriate potential packed lunches which works alongside the School Food Standards and the information above.

The advice is for guidance for parents and Alford Primary School actively encourages meals provided in line with it, however we **do not** allow the following to be brought into school as part of a packed lunch.

Restricted items

- No fizzy drinks
- No chocolate (cocoa flavoured products are accepted): a single chocolate covered biscuit bar will be accepted
- No sweets
- No food from fast food outlets
- A single bag of crisps or other savoury snack packet is acceptable

Assessment, evaluation and reviewing

Packed lunches will be regularly reviewed by midday meal supervisors

If a member of staff becomes aware that a child has a fizzy drink, solid chocolate, sweets or food from a fast food outlets in their lunch they will notify the Midday Lead Supervisor and Office who will make a note of the child and the food but will not discuss this directly with the child.

If a child regularly brings a packed lunch that does not conform to the policy then the school will contact the parents to discuss this.

Appendix 1

Starchy Foods

Base each meal on a starchy food, such as bread, potato, rice, pasta, couscous. Starchy foods give energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

- ✓ Bread, try different types, such as pitta bread, wraps, bread sticks or bread rolls.
- ✓ Other starchy foods, such as pasta or rice.
- ✓ Whole grain varieties are best for fibre, which is vital for a healthy digestive system.



Meat & Alternatives

Add some protein, for example meat, fish, eggs, beans or pulses. Protein foods build muscles and provide minerals.

- ✓ Lean meats, such as chicken, turkey or ham.
 - ✓ Include oily fish, such as pilchards, sardines or mackerel at least once every three weeks
 - ✓ Cheese, such as cottage cheese, edam or soft cheese.
 - ✓ Egg, such as quiche or omelette.
 - ✓ Meat alternatives, such as tofu or tempeh.
 - ✓ Dishes containing pulses, beans or meat, for example dahl, stew or bean salad.
- ⚠ Use butter, margarine, mayonnaise or salad dressings sparingly, because these can be high in fat, or use lower fat alternatives.
- ✗ The school does not allow nuts in packed lunches.



Healthier Swaps

- ✓ Replace sweets and chocolate with dried fruit, a small bunch of grapes or fruit salad or sugar-free jelly.
- ✓ Replace cakes and pastries with fruit bread or malt loaf.
- ✓ Replace salted savoury snacks with rice cakes or breadsticks.



Milk & Dairy Foods

Up to the age of 5, milk is provided for children who want it and after that, parents can purchase it if they wish. Ask your school for information.

- ✓ A side dish of a low fat, low sugar yoghurt or low sugar rice pudding provides calcium necessary for strong bones and teeth as well as providing protein and vitamins



Fruit & Vegetables



Don't forget to include fruit and vegetables. You can use fresh, frozen, tinned or dried. Fruit and vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals and fibre necessary for the body to function properly and to keep you strong and healthy.

- ✓ Add tomato, lettuce, cucumber or beetroot to a sandwich
- ✓ Include a portion of salad or roast vegetables
- ✓ Fresh fruit, such as apple, banana or pear.
- ✓ Dried fruit, such as raisins, apricots or figs.
- ✓ Fruit salad (fresh or tinned in juice) or vegetable salad.
- ✓ Finger foods, such as cherry tomatoes, cucumber sticks or celery are good with a dip, such as hummus or guacamole.



Using fresh fruit and vegetables, which are in season can help the environment

Drinks

Drinks, especially water, help children to concentrate and feel well. Water is freely available in school.



- ✓ You could try adding chopped fruit into water bottles to create new flavours
- ✗ Avoid squash, fizzy drinks and flavoured water, even those labelled 'sugar free' or 'no added sugar' as these can contribute to tooth decay and have little nutritional value

A Packed Lunch Guide for Parents

A healthy packed lunch is a balanced meal with a variety of nutrients to give your child the energy to learn, grow & develop.

Snacks & Confectionery

Snack foods may be included occasionally but aim to make healthier choices. Snack foods tend to be high in fat, sugar and salt. Foods high in fat can cause excessive weight and may lead to heart disease. High sugar foods are high in calories and bad for teeth. High salt foods may increase blood pressure, which can lead to heart disease and some cancers.

- ✗ Chocolate, sweets, chocolate spread, jam, salted savoury snacks and crisp like products should not be included in lunch boxes. Hot school lunch desserts are only allowed cocoa powder and no confectionery.

Appendix 2

Day 1



Tuna/Quorn & cucumber pasta salad

Low fat/Low sugar yoghurt



Small bunch of grapes

Wholemeal Bread sticks



Day 2

Turkey/Cheese & Pepper Sandwiches with cucumber and cherry tomatoes



Small banana

Slice of fruit bread



Small pot of low sugar rice pudding

Day 3



Curried mayo egg/chicken & chickpeas

Wedges of plain Naan



Carrot & Cucumber Sticks

Cheese, crackers & grapes



Day 4

Brown rice or couscous with peas & salmon/beans



Cherry tomatoes

Low fat/Low sugar yoghurt With strawberries & Blueberries



Slice of malt loaf

A week of possibilities!

Don't forget your water every day!



Day 5



Hummus with falafel/chicken bites & slices of wholemeal wrap

Strips of mixed peppers



Tub of apples & raisins

Pot of sugar free jelly

